

Admiral John Richardson, CNO
Decatur House
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Adm. Richardson: As we talk through the lunch time entertainment today, your introduction just reminds me how even going back to Stephen Decatur, so many things stay the same. So you mentioned your shipmate from Blue Back, my first CO, Captain Pete Graff. He and I are still in very close touch. And I would say that I'm in the Navy still largely because of the trajectory that Captain Graff set me on. That first tour is so important. And as you'll see a little bit later, I think that that also held sway for Stephen Decatur as he boarded his first ship.

And then with respect to my command tour on Honolulu, I just fell right into the wake of Admiral Greenert here, my predecessor in so many things. It's a great formula, just follow Admiral Greenert. [Laughter]. Burn off of his decay heat, and you'll still come out way above average. So it's great to see you again, sir.

And it is just wonderful to see so many distinguished guests here on such a terrific event. For the White House Historical Association, thank you so much for hosting this thing and for maintaining the Decatur House in such a fabulous state. It's just a privilege to be here to celebrate the 238th Birthday of Stephen Decatur, one of our Navy's founding fathers and one of our nation's finest leaders.

As I was preparing for this talk, you know, you look back through the history, and it has the same sort of flavor that you might think of when you give the talk at Trafalgar Night. Right? Here's an epic battle that has been talked about hundreds and hundreds of times, and here you are, you're going to talk about it yet again. You sort of think what are you going to possibly say?

It's a lot like Midway for us, right? I mean we've really converged around the Battle of Midway. And of course you can't talk about Trafalgar without thinking about Nelson; and you can't talk about Midway without thinking about Nimitz and so many other of those characters.

So these talks are easy because the history is well known by everybody, but they're hard because the history is so well known by everybody, and you try and find something entertaining to say about this thing.

I'm at a really good place here, because between the introduction to the Decatur House and a little bit of the life of Stephen Decatur, between that fabulous video that the USS Stephen Decatur and the captain, she did just such a terrific job. Between Admiral Kivens' invocation which covered the highlights of Stephen Decatur's life, I really have nothing left to say for you, so I'm just going to go to questions. Please enjoy your bookmark. The short rib was fantastic, and we'll just dispense with the formalities here.

No, I do have something I'm going to say.

I'll tell you what, as I think about this, there is nobody you can think of that I believe was more influential in the U.S. Navy, particularly at the beginning of the U.S. Navy, than Stephen Decatur. He is one of the first I would say post-Revolution generation of naval heroes. Right? So descendants of maybe the original greatest generation, our Founding Fathers. So he was the first generation after that.

His father, in fact, was a sea-faring captain in the Revolutionary War, and he commanded, I think he commanded three of the first six frigates that were built by the United States Navy. He served with people that read like a Who's Who of the founding of the United States Navy, and his career, as short as it was, reads just like an absolute adventure novel.

He was in near continuous conflict from the time he was a midshipman until the time he died. And I know Ted Carter last year, if you were here, he highlighted Stephen Decatur's sort of proclivity if not fondness for getting into duels, right? So it's an age gone by. We don't do too much of that anymore. And in fact one of these duels caught up with him. But this was sort of the swashbuckling nature of Stephen Decatur.

And again, before I really get started, I just want to say what a delight it is to be here in the Decatur House, part of his legacy really is the house here. One of the oldest homes in Washington, as was said. Designed by the famous architect Benjamin Latrobe who also, as you said, designed St. John's Church. He designed parts of the Capitol. And he also designed the gate that, this magnificent gate at the Washington Navy Yard

where we have our quarters. In fact I have the honor of living in another original house from that era, Tingey House, right in the shadow of the Latrobe Gate. It was finished just 14 years earlier than the Decatur House, here.

And you know, you think about Washington, DC and as you put together a talk about the founding of the nation, we realize how privileged we are to live here in the city which has so much of that history all around us. In fact during the holiday I was just riding my bike, there were some very warm days here and I was riding my bike up Bladensburg Road, and of course you know that that was the road by which the British entered the city during the War of 1812 where Decatur made himself even more famous. And they moved down into the city and of course started burning the city. Right? And during that time, during that war as the British moved in, the Secretary of the Navy at the time sent word to a Superintendent of the Navy Yard -- Thomas Tingey -- to burn it. Burn it all to the ground because they didn't want any of the capability of the Navy Yard falling into the hands of the British. And at that time, as it is now, a very capable place, but used to outfit ships, fit them out for war. So there was a tremendous amount of capability there. So Tingey started burning.

Again, in the vein of some things never change, I think his wife got in the middle of this and said look, you can burn anything you want, but you are not burning my house. Okay? So the Tingey House, finished in 1804, and it was one of those buildings that survived those fires of 1812. And it's the same in Tingey House today. Right? I have zero authority in that house. Dana always reminds me that no matter how many stripes or stars or whatever she has, just add one and that is her rank, and so some things do never change, indeed.

But I'll tell you, so much of the Navy Yard is exactly the same as it was in 1812, and it's kind of fun, as I put this chat together, to think about Tingey and Decatur literally walking the same exact streets that are still marked out.

Over the break, again, we got together at Dixon Smith's house, and he had these old maps of the Navy Yard. These are circa 1800 maps and they're the same. The streets are the same, the buildings are the same, the numbers of the buildings are the same. So it was kind of neat to envision Decatur walking through those streets.

Today as we think about Stephen Decatur, I spend a lot of time thinking about the importance of initiative in our Navy. There are few better places to look for examples of initiative than the life of Stephen Decatur. There's a lot of working definitions of initiative, but the one that sort of captures me is it's sort of a combination of using your authority and your skill to the absolute sort of theoretical limits. And that's the lens through which I'd like to maybe appreciate Stephen Decatur.

Stephen Decatur embodied initiative even from the very beginning. His father, although he was a seafarer and served in the United States Navy during the Revolution, they wanted Stephen Decatur to be a clergyman, an Episcopal clergyman. And right off the bat Decatur had this call to the sea, and you can imagine how much initiative it took to go against the wishes of your father who was a hero of the age and instead of going to the seminary or after trying it for a little while, struck off on his own and went to sea. Entered the United States Navy as a midshipman on the USS United States, which was still being built, under the command of Commodore John Barry, who was another one of my very favorite figures in the founding of our Navy. And I'm sure, just like Captain Graff influenced me during my first tour, had a permanent imprint on Stephen Decatur during his time on the United States. And they got underway a tremendous amount. The United States was one of the first ones actually completed. And so Midshipman Decatur had a tremendous experience on the United States during the quasi-war with France because they were actually at sea. They were at sea operating. So many of the other ships, and all the midshipmen and all the officers, they were still being built. The Navy was so young and so small that not too many people had operational experience. But Decatur had a chance to get out there with Barry and get underway and duke it out with the French warships during the quasi-war.

And during his career, from that time on the United States through the first Barbary War, through the War of 1812, there's a brief little inter-war period there before the War of 1812. And then the second Barbary War. Decatur literally authored some of the seminal events that still define our naval and indeed national history. Many of these are very well known to you so I won't belabor too many of the details.

But consider for a second just the burning of the Philadelphia during the first Barbary War. This stuff is the stuff of novels, right? He's using a captured sloop. It's an Arabic

looking thing, so he uses that, he takes his crew, 20 or so sailors, puts them in the hold. They disguise the ship as a Tripolitan sloop and they literally just kind of sneak up on the Philadelphia which, as we all know, had kind of run aground on an uncharted reef and was just sitting there. They tried and tried to get it off, and eventually it got captured and it was taken over.

Now they bring this sloop aboard. They come up, it's about 2100 at night now. The wind was very very calm so it was like the slowest sneaking up that ever happened. It took about three hours to get alongside the Philadelphia that night. But as soon as they did, it was just like, you could just see this in the movies, right? He gives the signal, everybody pours out of the hold. They board the ship, and within 10 minutes have the whole thing taken over. They've got it all seized. They assess the ship very quickly, determine it's no longer seaworthy and they then set charges throughout the ship. Decatur himself was the last guy to leave the ship, just to make sure it got a real charge and burned all the way to the water line. The sloop, Intrepid, steals way into the night, covered by their guard, and they escape under fire. No casualties and the Philadelphia is prevented from falling into the hands of the Barbary pirates.

Lord Nelson, no stranger to initiative himself, who was doing his favorite thing at the time, was just pummeling the French, was blockading the harbor of [Tulan] at the time. Got news of this, and he himself commented that that was one of the most daring acts of the age. Right? Which gives you a sense for just what went on when you've got somebody like Nelson providing that commentary, and it won Decatur fame throughout the nation. When the news of that operation got back to the United States, this young nation filled with pride at this terrific event.

So each of these events that Decatur did, and I'll talk about a couple more. Certainly tactically took a tremendous amount of skill and daring and initiative to pull them off. They were tactical strokes of genius. But they had this strategic effect on the nation because here's this brand new nation, looking for news exactly like this to strike their identity, to show that they were world players, that they belonged on the scene, and Decatur just sort of fed that in so many ways.

Later in this Barbary War, something that's not quite as famous as the Philadelphia, they were in the Bay of Tripoli and they were continuing to duke it out with these pirates, and it turns out his younger brother James was also in the war, also part of

the squadron that was fighting that first Barbary War. They were in this great battle in the harbor of Tripoli, a combination of ship-on-ship and they were being bombarded from shore. And just as Stephen Decatur is about to consummate the seizure and capture of his first Tripolitan ship of the battle, he gets word from another midshipman. So for all you midshipmen, note the theme here. Right? Decatur started as a midshipman. Here's a midshipman now going up to then Lieutenant Decatur saying hey, I just want to let you know your brother James has been mortally wounded in his engagement. So just as Decatur is feeling a sense of victory he gets this terrible news.

He turns this Tripolitan ship he has just captured over to his lieutenant, grabs his ship and runs off and just basically hunts down the ship and the captain that had mortally wounded his brother. Goes aboard the ship. Now he takes a small team aboard. They steam right up alongside and they board immediately, right? They're outnumbered five to one and Decatur's got tone, or at least what counted for tone in the Barbary War, on this captain. He's got it out for him. He fights his way with his cutlass into the captain. The captain has their weapon of choice, a giant lance. And they have this duel, again with the duels, right? Decatur's sword gets broken. He's about ready to get slashed pretty much in a defenseless posture. The death blow is coming down and one of Decatur's sailors throws himself into the way, takes the mortal blow from the sword, saves Decatur who eventually overcomes the captain of this ship, avenges his brother's death, and steals away.

Again, you know, going back to not only tremendous tactical skill; not only this sense of initiative; but it gives you a sense for just how even as he does all that how well regarded Decatur was by his crew. Loved and revered, really. So that they would literally step in front of the blade to save his life. Not necessarily common in those days, right? You just read Roger's Wooden World and you get a sense for how tough life at sea was. And to have somebody like Decatur who actually cared for his crew was a real privilege. Again, a lesson he learned, I'm sure, from John Barry who had a terrific reputation for being very humane and just with his crew.

All right, the initiative shown in just sort of seizing that ship, running after the killer of his brother. Again, executing his tactical prowess and his authority up to the theoretical limits.

Now if there's any time during Decatur's career where he was not in direct combat, it was a brief period between the end of the first Barbary War and the beginning of the War of 1812. It was called the inter-war period. This was the time during which the conditions for the War of 1812 were set. Right? One of those conditions that led to the war was the sort of persistent pressing of U.S. sailors into service in the Royal Navy. It just became one of those things that was one, unjust; unfair; and it was driving a giant wedge between the United States and Britain. And there was this particular case in Norfolk of three sailors, crew members of the USS Chesapeake. They were down in Norfolk, Virginia. The Royal Navy was making the case that these sailors should be sent over to the Royal Navy and the CO of the Chesapeake was refusing to do so. And this became an issue at very senior diplomatic levels, right? They were talking about it at the ambassadorial or kind of the Charge d'Affaires level. So it was getting some very senior attention. It was becoming a political deal.

In fact as I was doing a little bit of the research here there's a Mr. Erskin, John, and I think that might be the first dedicated documented appearance of Bob Erskin in the United States Navy. Right there at the beginning of the War of 1812. Exactly. Just a young seaman Erskin. [Laughter].

Anyway, fast forward -- I apologize. That's a bit of an inside joke.

So anyway, back to our story where we left off. So this diplomatic battle is going back and at the end of the day the United States refused to turn it over. The Chesapeake captain, James Barren, did not turn his sailors over and went to sea on Chesapeake. Well, as soon as they got out to sea they were challenged by the Royal Navy for these sailors. This is all the captain of this Royal Navy vessel wanted, the HMS Leopard, was he wanted those three sailors. And he came and challenged the Chesapeake at sea. And this is sort of the counter-example of initiative. The captain of the Chesapeake was completely unprepared to go to sea. When challenged, said, hey, we've been through this, I'm not turning my sailors over. But when really challenged, the Leopard opened fire and the Chesapeake was in no condition to return fire. She was unable to return fire and so had to turn the sailors over, go back to Norfolk damaged and shamed.

At that time Decatur was the head of the Navy Yard essentially down there, received this vessel, and was just outraged at the

complacency and the lack of initiative that Captain Barren had demonstrated; sat his court martial; dismissed Barren. Barren had to go overseas, because he was prohibited from commanding a vessel for some time. And they never got along, Barren and Decatur. In fact it was Barren who came back, tried to get back into the Navy. Decatur again blocked him. Again, we go to the duel. And Decatur lost. And that was the duel between Decatur and Barren, some years later, that ended up being the event that killed Stephen Decatur. And as was said, he died here in this house.

But he never lost his outrage for Captain Barren and his lack of preparedness, lack of initiative. So there was both these tremendous personal examples of initiative and also the outrage at the lack of initiative.

In the War of 1812 as you saw in the video and has been mentioned, there was this terrific battle at sea between the USS United States, now with Decatur in command, and the HMS Macedonian. Sometimes you've got to read into the details of these things. Again, you know, the United States handled tactically absolutely brilliantly. First to even come in contact with the Macedonian, it was almost a miracle in those days. This was not here near a port off the shore. This was well in the Atlantic, some 500 miles south of the Azores, kind of hanging out on a trade route. So even being able to detect the sails of another ship was good fortune. And then when Decatur closed Macedonian, basically the way the battle unfolded is that the United States had canon that had farther range than the Macedonian, and Decatur established that range where his canons were effective, and the Macedonian's were not, and just pummeled the Macedonian from that range. And continued to maneuver to stay right in that sweet spot. Got off 70 broadsides against Macedonian. Macedonian could only return about 30. And as you heard, brought that ship in, brought her back as a prize. Again, tactical brilliance, skill and authority exercised to their theoretical limits. But also strategic effect as this young nation now got the signal that they could go toe-to-toe with the vaunted Royal Navy and they could make it happen. So the national pride, the national identity that swelled up from that event went far beyond the tactical events of the day.

So you could go on and on, right? The second Barbary War, and basically his almost single-handed submission of not only Tripoli but Algiers and Tunis. Ending the days of tribute to the countries of that nation, literally in a week once he got

his squadron over. It's no wonder that he came back as just such a tremendous symbol of what this new Navy and new nation could do and serves today as an example of what the power of initiative brings. It's this blend of power and diplomacy so well demonstrated, and remains on to this day.

So as I think about what does Decatur mean for us today? As you heard, the guided missile Decatur, the ship that's so wisely named. They just executed this Pacific Surface Action Group which was a very unique idea. So this three-ship SAG left San Diego, three DDG's. Right? And we normally deploy in a carrier strike group, so this is a bit of a new idea or I guess a return to an old idea, really. Admiral Reese is shaking like yes. [Laughter]. But they remained under the command of 3rd Fleet which is homeported in San Diego. Normally those ships would chop to the 7th Fleet commander. So they were under command and control of the 3rd Fleet commander which that in and -- we made a little bit of news with that. We let that be known. And boy, that really got a lot of people thinking over in the theater. The Chinese and many of our allies. What does this mean for the United States and their role in the Pacific? And particularly the Western Pacific. This new command and control structure. What does that mean?

So it had just a terrific effect. A lot of eyes were on that Pacific Action Group including the Decatur and they just did really brilliantly, doing a tremendous amount of bilateral exercises, showing presence in the South China Sea. And a number of events with community relation and partnership building events with all of our allies out there. Having this same diplomatic effect, right, that Decatur modeled for us so much earlier.

I'll tell you, this shift in our Surface Action Group, and indeed our operations around the world are indicative of a shift in the maritime environment, in the strategic environment, that we all need to take note of. A ship that I think signals a return to peer competition, and that has not been that way for some time. I would say 25 years, really, since the fall of the Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall, we have really not been contested at sea for sea control since that time. And that is changing. In very important parts of the world right now we are being contested for the sea.

And it is in these peacetime postures, particularly these long term times of peace, you know, initiative might be among the first casualties, right? We get comfortable. We get these, the

DNA of initiative starts to dilute. So it's got my mind, as I said, now as we return to this era of competition.

And in the spirit of Decatur, I think he would be proud that our Navy leaders are stepping up to the plate in so many ways.

I hope that you've all had a chance to read a little bit about the USS Mason. Another destroyer. And just like Decatur and his squadron in the Barbary Wars, here is USS Mason down in the southern part of the Red Sea, right near another choke point. There's Decatur operating around Gibraltar. There's Mason operating in the Bab-el-Mandeb, guaranteeing freedom of navigation, protecting our interests far from our shores, exactly what our Navy was born to do and exactly what our Navy is doing today. And she is there. She has been trained up and certified with the Eisenhower Strike Group. She is on station there protecting traffic through that strait. And almost out of nowhere, unprovoked by Mason certainly, she gets attacked by coastal defense cruise missiles off of Yemen. I will tell you, the crew responded exactly as you would hope that they would. They had seen this precise scenario, a missile shot from a coast in a very noisy electromagnetic and physical environment. They had seen it in their training. They had run through these drills, just like Decatur's crew ran through their gun drills. And they responded exactly as they would.

Now I will tell you, we were talking a little bit during lunch, there's a huge difference in the minds of a crew that is going through a simulation to do all this and understanding the button pushing and all of that, and actually living through the real thing. And there's a transition that happens in your mind. Those sailors on the Mason have been through that transition now. And there's a transition maybe ahead of the rest of our Navy. And if the Mason's any indication, they're going to do just fine.

There are many more examples of initiative. I had the privilege of traveling through the theater over the holiday period, had a chance to, this was Thanksgiving actually, so we woke up Thanksgiving morning in Djibouti, did a 5K turkey trot there with the team in Djibouti, paying it forward. Took an Osprey out to the USS Wasp, spent some time on the Wasp for Thanksgiving dinner number one with the sailors and marines there. They had certified and deployed like everybody else, but nowhere in their play book did they think that they would have to pull up off of Libya, again, and do strikes into cert against ISIL and the spread of counterterrorism cross Northern Africa.

They had done that brilliantly with their Harriers and their Cobras and were continuing to control strikes off of Libya even though they were in the Red Sea.

So it shows you this networked global dimension of our Navy. So those sailors showing tremendous initiative to prepare and execute that mission, and really now, that situation in Libya, we're in a much better place by virtue of their efforts. And around the world. Protecting freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, in the Baltics. Like Decatur, your leaders of your Navy today, they know their business, they have trust of their teams, they understand their authorities and they are exercising them to their theoretical limit. And it is this commitment that they have to protecting our interests, enhancing our prosperity far from our shores that I think is the biggest tribute that we can pay to Stephen Decatur, and it's a terrific remembrance. It's very appropriate that we can sit together on his birthday here and remember that.

So Decatur's life I think serves as an inspiration for us all as we think about the power of initiative. It serves as a cautionary tale for what can happen if we let initiative atrophy. And there's no question I think right now in my mind, that that spirit of initiative is alive and well in our Navy today. Those who support our interests around the globe, we need to do I think everything we can to continue to support them, encourage, cultivate and preserve the initiative of Decatur. In fact Stephen Decatur himself would have absolutely insisted upon it.

So as I close, I just want to thank the White House Historical Association again for a fabulous dinner. Secretary Dalton, thank you so much for inviting me to have the privilege of speaking here.

I'd just ask one favor of you today as we end Christmastide here, bringing all of that holiday time to a close, as you put your head down tonight, please take a moment to say a prayer for all those sailors around the world who continue to protect our freedom today. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Voice: What do you see the future as far as like unmanned aerial vehicles, and the underwater drone the Chinese happened to come across, what do you see as the future of that?

Adm. Richardson: I think there's a terrific opportunity there in unmanned. We've been investing heavily into that. And so the way forward with unmanned aerial, we've got a lot of land-based unmanned aerial that we run. WE have smaller unmanned aircraft that are providing tremendous ISR support to us right now. We're at the cusp of some pretty big unmanned initiatives right now. Triton is one of those. That's a land-based system.

But the one that I really am excited about perhaps first among equals is the MQ-25. It's our carrier-based unmanned. We're going to get something unmanned on the deck as soon as we can. I'm thinking single digits of years here so that we can one, it will have a legitimate mission extending the range of the air wing by tanking. It will liberate about five Super Hornets that are doing that mission right now, to go and do strike missions. And it will teach us so much in terms of how to get unmanned and manned working together in the air wing.

And so we really want to get that down. In parallel, we're going to let the technology mature in terms of taking that unmanned air frame and doing even more challenging, longer-range strike missions, those types of things. Other missions. When it's appropriate. But our first and foremost objective is to get something on deck as quickly as possible, make it part of the air wing, get it up there and start learning.

It's the same thing in the undersea. Unmanned aerial vehicles have become sort of part of what we do now in terms of providing mission support. We are cracking that barrier now with underwater vehicles. The letter of competence, power density, navigation, all of that has reached the point where we're doing operational missions with UUVs now and I think once that demand signal starts to be felt, it will be just like UAVs. Everybody will want one of these things and they'll start to proliferate.

And I wouldn't ignore the unmanned surface vessels as well. So if you think about missions like mine countermeasures and mine hunting, you know, often that mission is done with sort of an underwater body that's towed. And what a great mission to send an unmanned surface vessel with just enough autonomy to be able to run those patterns, tow that vehicle. You take the man out of the loop completely and the risk calculus changes dramatically.

I think in all three domains, moving forward pretty briskly. Thanks.

Voice: Who has the second-best Navy in the world today?

Adm. Richardson: Geez.

Voice: Are there any significant gap closings? Or numbers of vessels and capabilities [inaudible]?

Adm. Richardson: With respect to partners that we are working with, it's really, the way I like to think about it is if you appreciate our mission as sort of global maritime security, I would say that things like information sharing technologies and those sorts of things have allowed us to stitch together maritime coalitions, international coalitions, in ways that are much more efficient and effective than ever before. So the total effectiveness, the total level of maritime security I think is on the rise. So if I have a Navy that maybe can only contribute to patrolling my territorial seas on a good day, hey, if they're doing that, that's something that another Navy doesn't have to do. And the high end navies can be then assigned those missions that maybe only they with their capabilities and authorities can do. And so you see this distribution of labor that's very effective and very efficient, and it contributes to an overall enhancing maritime security.

So I think in terms of achieving maritime security around the globe, everybody's playing a bigger role than they ever have before.

At the high end, I think you wouldn't be surprised on the allied side that we're working very closely with the French-commanded Task Force 50 from the Charles de Gaulle in the Gulf. I had a chance to give them a Meritorious Unit Citation for their time in command of that task force. They're continuing to do great work.

Of course we're working very closely, as always, with the United Kingdom--, well, maybe not as always as I read this. Certainly in recent history with the United Kingdom. In fact they are now commanding Task Force 50 in the Gulf from HMS Ocean.

And there is a real hunger on the parts of those navies to do high end warfare. It was interesting, I was at a conference in Italy recently and the Chiefs of Navy were all there. And it just sort of hit me that so much was going on at one time. In the Mediterranean, Southern Europe, at the time the NATO nations were dealing with the challenge of the migration from Northern Africa, and how do you deal with that in a humane and effective

way? I wouldn't say that that's necessarily a high end capability, but certainly a very important and delicate mission. So they were handling that.

At the same time, off the Hebrides in Scotland, there was a multinational coalition of NATO ships doing a very high end ballistic missile defense and coastal defense cruise missile defense exercise. Simultaneous detection, tracking and engagement of not only an anti-ship ballistic missile but a bunch of cruise missiles shot at the same time. All of those ships contributing again in some way. Some, the first time doing that, just observing; others were detecting and tracking, handing that track off to somebody else who would shoot. And everybody finding their place at the high end. So that's on the allied side.

And of course I think it's not a mystery that the Chinese are the pacing threat in terms of overall naval capability on the competitor side, if you will. The Russians certainly doing an awful lot with the Navy that they have. They never really stopped advancing in their undersea capabilities, but we've got the Kuznetsov Task Force doing operations in the Mediterranean, the first time ever. Right?

So as I said, we're returning to an era where there's competition for sea control out there. Your Navy's responding to that signal.

Voice: Sir, it's a pleasure. Thanks a lot.

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